



Coming of Age in the Milky Way

By Timothy Ferris

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From the second-century celestial models of Ptolemy to modern-day research institutes and quantum theory, this classic book offers a breathtaking tour of astronomy and the brilliant, eccentric personalities who have shaped it. From the first time mankind had an inkling of the vast space that surrounds us, those who study the universe have had to struggle against political and religious preconceptions. They have included some of the most charismatic, courageous, and idiosyncratic thinkers of all time. In *Coming of Age in the Milky Way*, Timothy Ferris uses his unique blend of rigorous research and captivating narrative skill to draw us into the lives and minds of these extraordinary figures, creating a landmark work of scientific history.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The ancient Egyptians regarded the sky as a kind of tent canopy. Thirty centuries later, astronomer William Herschel argued that the sun belongs to a huge cluster of stars (a galaxy, as we call it today) and charted great swaths of intergalactic space through a telescope. How the human species slowly awakened to the vast reaches of space and time is the story absorbingly told by popular science writer Ferris (*The Red Limit, Galaxies*). His narrative humanizes the scientific enterpriseGalileo emerges here as a careerist, and Johannes Kepler as a self-loathing neurotic. Although it covers well-trod ground, this remarkable synthesis makes broad areas of science accessible to the layperson, from Darwin's and Lyell's investigations of the age of the earth to modern physicists' quest for a perfectly symmetrical, hyperdimensional universe. BOMC alternate. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

YA In the first section, Ferris uses historical anecdotes to relate astronomical discoveries and the foibles of their discoverers in a successful attempt to show the "big names" of science as real persons, warts and all. The second section, on the history of space and time, is also well done, if lacking in the human details. The third section, which deals with cosmology and modern physics, uses a philosophical approach to discuss difficult material; the result is not easy to absorb, but it is good base material for students who will ask questions and go further on their own. Throughout the book, introductory quotations are used to advantage to tease readers into the next topic. Bob Fliess, Episcopal High School, Bellaire, Tex .
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From the Publisher

Winner of the 1988 American Institute of Physics Prize and named one of 1988's best books by the *New York Times Book Review*, this brilliant, lively and informative book seeks to comprehend the enormities of cosmic space and time and how this quest has shaped religion, politics and philosophy.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Smith:

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Rachel Kaufman:

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